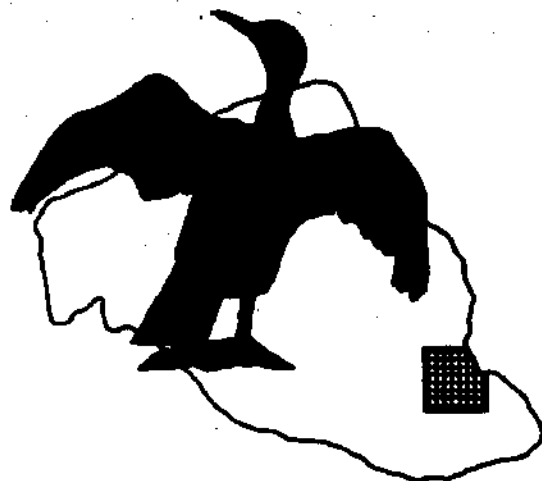


****ATTENTION****

This document is provided for historical purposes only.

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SINCLAIR ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA

On July 1, 1974, the Washington Department of Wildlife accepted the donation of 35 acres of land on Sinclair Island from Mary March Leach and assumed responsibility to preserve the land as habitat for wildlife and maintain the area for enjoyment by the public.

Sinclair Island Wildlife Area is located on the eastern shore of Sinclair Island about eight miles northwest of Anacortes. It is situated on a small bay and is accessible by boat.

Exploring Sinclair Island Wildlife Area

The attraction of Sinclair Island Wildlife Area comes from its historical character and uniqueness as a diversified island habitat. Numerous species of songbirds use this area during the summer. Spring, summer and fall are good for encounters with various raptors. Waterfowl may be seen especially in the fall and winter months. The boat trip in to Sinclair Island Wildlife Area offers views of several types of seabirds present around the islands. And there is a

chance, you'll see some of the marine mammals common in the area. Many experiences are available to the visitor in and around the:

- Distinct vegetation communities
- Extensive woodland
- Historical homestead
- Historical post office
- 1.6 acre pond/marsh
- Productive apple orchard and berry patch
- Coniferous forest
- 1,000 feet of frontage pebble beach and shallow bay

Human History

The land on Sinclair Island Wildlife Area was first cleared for logging in the 1800s. The site was being used as a landing for "chuting shingle bolts." Log booms were constructed in the bay to contain logs until ready for towing to the mills. Although logging devastated the virgin forests it opened the land for farm homesteads. The first homestead was established in 1889 with the issuance of a federal land patent.

A post office was created on this site in 1895 when Joseph Henry was notarized as first post-

master of Sinclair Island. Henry provided mail service by rowing out to exchange mailbags with the awaiting mail boats. The existing structure on the Wildlife Area is the former post office and residence of Joseph Henry. The old mail slot can still be seen in the front wall of the building.

The area is also the site of an early 1990s farm, cleared by oxen. Although crops and livestock flourished, the hardships of island living were great. After several changes of ownership, the land was relinquished for taxes. The early 1930s saw the last human residents on what is now the Wildlife Area. In 1945, Mary March Leach, the niece of those last residents, acquired the property and subsequently donated it to the wildlife and people of Washington.

During your visit to the Sinclair Island Wildlife Area, you will encounter diverse habitats and plant life. The variety is what makes this place so interesting. One of the more pleasurable spots is the long pebble beach, which takes on a different character with each tidal change. To climb the vege-

SINCLAIR ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA

tated bank above the beach, you must find the old wooden staircase approximately midway along the beach hidden among the shrubs leading to the upland. If you are observant many species of birds on and around the island will become apparent.

Habitats and Common Plants on Sinclair Island

Forest Understory

Salal
Oregon grape
Trailing blackberry
Salmonberry
Snowberry
Red huckleberry
Western bracken
Western thimbleberry

Upland Timber

Red alder
Bigleaf maple

Moist Shady

Western swordfern
Alder
Pacific dogwood

Elderberry
Oceanberry
Marsh/pond
Sedge
Tule
Skunk cabbage
Rush
Cattails
Grasses

Coniferous Forest

Douglas fir
Western hemlock
Sitka spruce
Western swordfern

Low Moist

Willow
Vine maple

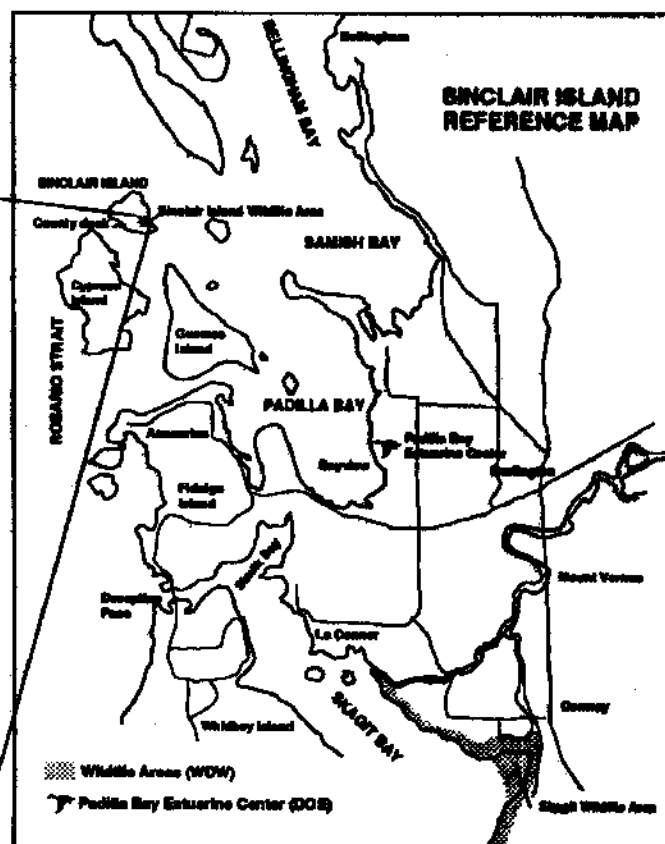
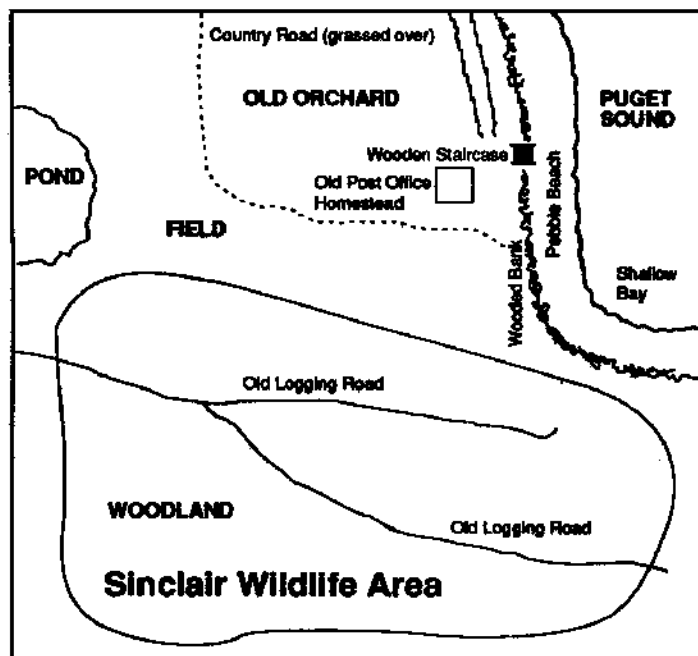
Birdlife varies with the season. Bring field guides, pamphlets and binoculars to aid in identification. A recommended pamphlet is "A Field Guide to Bird Watching in

Skagit County" available from the Washington Department of Wildlife.

You might see an endangered peregrine falcon. It is likely you will spot red-tailed hawks, belted kingfishers and bald eagles since they are residents of the island. Many songbirds make this their home as well.

As a visitor to the island, respect this as a home for wildlife and create as little disturbance as possible. You can avoid disturbing wildlife by:

- using binoculars for viewing
- restricting your activities during the breeding season
- enjoying the area quietly
- leaving your pets at home
- not having fires, firearms camps or motor vehicles in the area

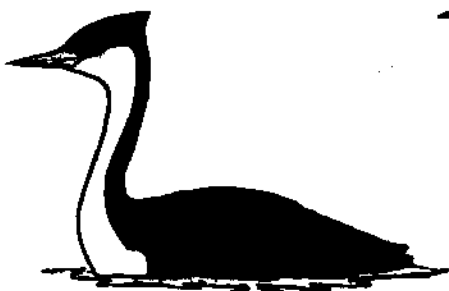


SINCLAIR ISLAND WILDLIFE AREA

Approaching the island, you might encounter:



CORMORANTS



GREBES



LOONS



RHINOCEROS AUKLETS



PIGEON GUILLEMOTS

The management goals for Sinclair Wildlife Area are to leave it in its natural state. Needs of wildlife come first, followed by compatible public use such as wildlife observation and non-consumptive recreation. Allowing the island to return to its natural state will attract those species of plants and animals originally present on the island before human development. Since many species of wildlife prefer more isolated and less disturbed places, allowing the area to revert to its previous condition will provide visitors with the opportunity to see wildlife rare in more populated places. Visitors will also be given the opportunity to witness habitat changes through time.

Some management activities have been considered for the future including:

- Restore & maintain marsh/pond
 - Clear openings in the woodlands
- Clearings create more habitat diversity and attract more species of animals and provide viewing areas for visitors.

Your responsibilities as a visitor include:

- Minimize disturbance to the plant and animal life
- Learn about the plants and wildlife to your enjoyment
- Gain or enhance your appreciation for the way wildlife lives in an undisturbed environment

Mary March Leach died on August 24, 1989. This pamphlet is dedicated to her memory. Mary's donation of the Sinclair Island Wildlife Area and her book *Cottonwood Collection* will preserve the unique history of this island.

Funds for preserving and man-

aging Sinclair Island Wildlife Area are provided by the WDW Nongame Program. For further information on Sinclair Island, contact the Department of Wildlife's Region 4 office at 16018 Mill Creek Blvd., Mill Creek, WA 98012, (tel.) (206) 775-1311.

You may contribute to the support of the nongame wildlife program by purchasing a personalized license plate. To apply for a personalized plate contact the Department of Licensing, Vehicle Service, Personalized Plate Desk, Olympia, WA 98504.

The Washington Department of Wildlife will provide equal opportunities to all potential and existing employees without regard to race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital status, national origin, disability, or Vietnam Era Veteran's status.

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